

# Connections

The Newsletter of Abundant Peace Aikido and T'ai Chi School

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## Events Calendar

**Annual Weekend Retreat;** March 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012, at the Star of the North Retreat Centre in St. Albert. Our theme for this transformative and empowering weekend is *“Meditation – Path to Clarity”*. Take part in this weekend as an opportunity to recharge your batteries, reconnect and gain clarity within and without!

**Imamura Shihan Seminar:** April 20<sup>th</sup> through 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012, at Aikido of Missoula. As Saotome Sensei has cancelled his annual seminar, this will be our only opportunity to reconnect with our Missoula friends. These trips are always worthwhile, and are an extremely valuable training experience. Imamura Shihan was a direct student of O'Sensei; there are very few of these left alive, so this seminar presents us with an opportunity to connect with a very rare and disappearing treasure. The time to start planning this trip is upon us; clear your calendars and join us for this special event!

## Editorial

I write this on the eve of departing for California, for a brief break from my routine; although I look forward to the change, and perhaps some sunshine, it will not be nearly long enough!

The Dojo Community continues to be healthy and active. We welcomed a new group of beginner T'ai Chi students in February, and on the aikido side we continue to see an influx of beginners.

There are a few events coming up that bear mention. First, the annual Retreat Weekend will take place at the end of this Month; next, our Aikido students have a rare opportunity to attend a very special seminar on the weekend of 20<sup>th</sup> through 22<sup>nd</sup> April; and third, it appears likely that we will welcome David Goldberg Sensei back to Edmonton early in June.

Exciting times ahead; I look forward to sharing these experiences with you.

## Promotions

We congratulate as well the following aikido students on their advancement:

**Kids:** Rowan T. Jr. 14<sup>th</sup> Kyu; Graham M. Jr. 14<sup>th</sup> Kyu.

**Adults:** Sofia L. 9<sup>th</sup> Kyu; Chad F. 7<sup>th</sup> Kyu; Chad S. 7<sup>th</sup> Kyu; Leigh F. 7<sup>th</sup> Kyu.

*Remember our Library, named for a member of the Canadian Forces, Corporal Francisco Gomez, who was killed in Afghanistan. The Library exists for all to enjoy.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Special Training for the month of March** will take place on the evening of Friday, the 16<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30 to 9:30 PM. Our focus will be on the method and technique of dealing with multiple attackers; we will work to deepen our understanding of using movement, spatial awareness, and strategies to neutralize multiple attackers, including weapons attack. Deepen your understanding of the principles of Aikido by attending these special sessions!

We congratulate our Beginner T'ai Chi class on having already reached the milestone of the first "Cross Hands" in the set; this is a real achievement! They will celebrate this accomplishment with their first Noodle Night, some time March.

**Gift Certificates are still available** from Sensei Brad. "Give the Gift of Health"! Purchase gift certificates for your friends and family, for T'ai Chi or Aikido classes, to encourage them to keep their wellness goals in 2012.

**Training supplies such as uniforms and weapons** are available for purchase through the School. Prices are reasonable and quantities limited, so see Sensei today.

**New at [www.abundantpeace.com](http://www.abundantpeace.com)** is for you to discover, by checking our web site regularly! It is always kept fresh by our Web Master; in addition to the regular events pages and the like, there are always new videos, articles and story pages.

**Sensei Brad is pleased to announce** the launch of a new Health Newsletter! This on line publication will cover a wide range of general health related topics, with a special focus on the blending of timeless wisdom with modern science and technology. Check it out at [www.improvehealthnow.net](http://www.improvehealthnow.net) or ask Brad for details.

**Aikido of Missoula will host** Tatsunori Imamura Shihan for a seminar on the weekend of 20<sup>th</sup> through 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2012. Further details will be made available as they are known, and if sufficient interest exists we may try to organize a van large enough for all of us to travel together.

There is no adult Aikido Class on Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012; the Kid's Class will proceed as scheduled.

# Philosophy of Training

*"The basic difference between an ordinary person and a warrior is that a warrior takes everything as a challenge, while an ordinary person takes everything either as a blessing or as a curse."*

- Don Juan (C. Castaneda), Tales of Power.

**JuJitsu training demands slow purposeful study, and one must develop self-control, humility, and a sense of responsibility for others. Though not necessarily evident to the untrained eye, most of these techniques can be extremely dangerous, and should therefore be taught only under a qualified instructor's supervision. This is one reason why cultivating sincere moral and ethical development is such an important prerequisite. It is our belief that this training should enhance not only a person's physical abilities but also the best of their subtle inner qualities. It should create opportunities to confront one's problematic habits, striving to redirect them into positive character traits.**

**It is said that it requires ten years of practice to gain control over yourself and it requires twenty years to gain control over others. For a student to progress in rank, their character must develop. "Our goal is not (so much) one of producing competent fighters, but (more so) one of producing competent individuals."**

**Our method of teaching is largely based on senior students teaching junior students (we teach best what we need to learn most). When practicing the arts, both partners assist each other in their training, and it is only by helping one another that real progress is made. Safety is important, since injury unnecessarily sets back a student's training.**

**JuJitsu is not a sport, but a way to develop a very efficient means of self-defense. How much one can get out of these techniques is entirely up to the practitioner, on one's attitude and dedication; on one's willingness to drop preconceived ideas, and on how much of an open mind one wants to develop.**

**Our goal is to cultivate an environment whereby people can learn to understand themselves, to take responsibility for their actions, and to take charge of their life - the responsibilities of a proficient martial artist.**